

January 26, 2015

To the Chairs and Members of the Committee on Children:

I am writing in support of Raised Bill No. 207, AN ACT CONCERNING FUNDING FOR A LYME DISEASE PREVENTION AND EDUCATION PROGRAM. The Connecticut Department of Health (DPH) should be awarded \$450,000 to implement and sustain a statewide Lyme disease prevention effort.

The BLAST PROGRAM is cost efficient and viable. BLAST stands for the five most important measures that people can take to prevent tick-borne diseases by reducing tick bites.

- B stands for bathing soon after spending time outdoors,
- L reminds people to look their bodies over for ticks and to remove them properly,
- A encourages people to apply repellents appropriately when outdoors,
- S stands for spraying the perimeter of yards at the most effective time of the year,
- T reminds people to treat pets.

Connecticut has one of the highest rates of Lyme disease in the country. The problem is even more serious now that we know the same tick species that transmits the agent that causes Lyme also transmits several other diseases, including anaplasmosis, ehrlichiosis and babesiosis to people. Successful Lyme Disease prevention is a functional of education and personal responsibility.

People at the highest risk for tick-transmitted diseases, including Lyme disease, are children under 10 and adults over 55 years of age. These are vulnerable populations. Lyme Disease may be a mild event or a life changing catastrophe. Intelligence is the principle of dependable foresight. We need to make an intelligent choice.

A commitment of state funds is needed to implement and sustain a statewide prevention program focused on raising awareness of tick-borne disease prevention in 2015.

Sincerely,

Andrew Cimmino  
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